

**General Plan 2020 Steering Committee Meeting
October 20, 2001 – Minutes**

Attendees:

Margarette Morgan	Bonsall
Chuck Davis	Bonsall
Richard Whitaker	Boulevard
Tim McMaster	Crest/Dehesa/Harbison Canyon/Granite Hills
John Elliott	Descanso
Shirley J. Fisher	Jacumba
Dan Nierenckx	Jamul/Dulzura
Gene Helsel	Julian
Scott Boyd	Lake Morena/Campo
Gordon Shackelford	Lakeside
Juliana Bugbee	Lakeside
Joe Chisolm	Pala/Pauma
Curtis Nicolaisen	Rainbow
Dutch Van Dierendonck	Ramona
Lois Jones	San Dieguito
John Ferguson	Spring Valley
Gil Jemmott	Twin Oaks
Jack Phillips	Valle de oro
Larry Glavinic	Valley Center

Visitors:

Carl Meyer	Potrero
Parke Troutman	UCSD
Rick Smith	Lakeside
Richard Hensle	Lakeside
Jan Van Dierendonck	Ramona
Mary Allison	USDRIC
Keith Behner	Rancho Santa Fe Assn.
Charlene Ayers	

Planning Commissioners:

Bryan Woods
Dave Kreitzer

County:

Ivan Holler (DPLU)
Tim Popejoy (DPLU)
Neal LaMontagne (DPLU)
Howard Blackson (DPLU)
Michelle Yip (DPLU)
Karen Scarborough (DPLU)

Meeting commenced at 9:05 am

First Agenda Item: Approval of Minutes –

There was a correction made to page 5 of the August 25, 2001 minutes. G. Jemmott corrected the spelling of his name, a typing error on the word “receiving”, and stated that he expressed concern rather than disagreement. D. Van Deirendonck moved to approve the minutes. G. Jemmott seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

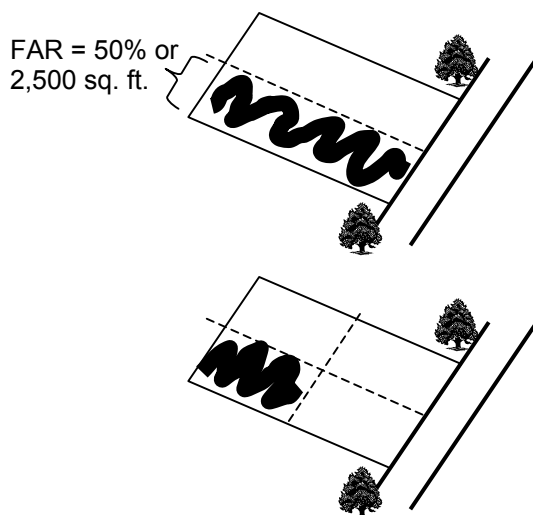
J. Phillips stated that his understanding of today’s meeting was to hold further discussion on the draft regional categories, in which he had prepared for and wanted to express his concerns and opinions before the categories are finished. B. Woods noted that the draft regional categories are going to come back to this table for further discussion and will give the opportunity to express opinions today.

M. Morgan asked if the committee was going to receive the flowchart from Marette Esperance (DPLU). B. Woods stated that staff has not heard from Marette yet.

M. Morgan moved to approve the October 6, 2001 minutes. D. van Dierendonck seconded the motion. Motion passed with two abstentions.

Non-Agenda Item: Floor Area Ratio (FAR) –

H. Blackson gave a brief overview of Floor Area Ratio (FAR). We have been talking about residential and density of such, using dwelling units per acre. Today, we will be talking about commercial and industrial, in which we use a different type of measuring tool for intensity. The State’s General Plan Guidelines (pp. 39) state that “Local general plans must contain quantifiable standards of building intensity for each land use designation”, meaning dwelling units per acre, and FARs for commercial and industrial. “These standards should define the most intensive use that will be allowed under each designation. While the land use designation identifies the type of allowable uses, the building intensity standard will define the concentration of use. Intensity standards can include provisions for flexibility....”



An FAR is a floor area ratio. For example, if you have a lot with an area of 5,000 sq. ft. and an FAR of 50% or .5, that would mean that the building can cover 50% of the entire area of the lot, so therefore, your building can be 2,500 sq. ft. If you have an FAR of 1, you can then cover the entire lot and so your building can be 5,000 sq. ft. With regards to flexibility, you can adjust the lot or appearance of the building through height, maximum lot coverage, etc.

If you have an FAR of .25, that means a quarter of the lot is available to be covered. How your design standards dictate where that quarter is, through setbacks, height restrictions, etc., is up to the individual community plan or individual design standards. That is what FAR means, when you talk about regulating building intensity for commercial and industrial.

G. Shackelford asked whether this was in terms of actual square footage to floor area. H. Blackson and N. LaMontagne agreed, adding that if you have an FAR of 1, you can either build onto the entire lot or a two story building on half the lot.

B. Woods interjected that this is by request in that it is simple but complicated and is going by the standpoint that it will be presented at least two times to ensure that you are comfortable enough with it to take back to your communities, as it may be a tool you may want to use in your community for standards of development in your commercial and industrial areas.

J. Phillips asked how parking affects the floor area ratio. H. Blackson replied that it obviously reflects how much coverage you will have on your entire area. J. Phillips asked if it was counted in the floor area coverage. H. Blackson responded that it is not, as floor area is inside of a building in built form for your working floor. The parking standards do not apply to FAR.

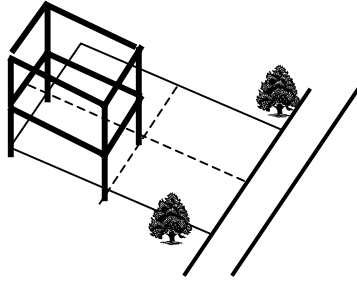
H. Blackson explained that FAR is the floor ratio to area. The area is the entire lot and the floor is the coverage that we are having a ratio to. It is built floor onto entire area and that is the ratio. B. Woods added that that is why .25 is one-quarter of the lot is going to be covered, whether you are going to add it vertically. No matter how you add it up, only one-quarter of the entire area can be covered. T. Popejoy clarified that it is not actually coverage but rather how many square feet your building can be, so it is not how big the floor is on the first floor or how much whatever the square footage is allowed under the FAR, where it is on the site, etc. What you then have is other zoning aspects, like height restrictions, setbacks, and parking requirements, based on the use that create the parameters for your buildable cube on that site. If you are allowed to build a 5,000 sq. ft. building, you may build 5,000 sq. ft. in a one-story or you may have a five-story building comprised of 1,000 sq. ft. stories that have to be set back 20 feet. It is actually more of a bulk regulation than coverage regulation, or intensity. T. Popejoy stated that he found the State Guidelines as confusing because intensity usually refers to a warehouse versus a smelting operation. They are obviously very different in the intensity of their uses but their FAR can be the same.

J. Ferguson mentioned that on the Design Review Board, they generally handle these kinds of situations with the present height and density limits. He asked if staff was assuming that FARs were superior in some respect. I. Holler responded that many of the regulatory functions that J. Ferguson was describing is zoning. The only thing that staff is introducing here is the bulk, whereas the other regulators, such as setbacks and height limits are zoning. J. Ferguson asked if it was a minimum or maximum. N. LaMontagne responded that it is a maximum. If you think of how density works, if we know roughly how many people are in an area, then we know roughly how wide the roads should be. FAR works the same way for commercial, you know roughly how many square footage, you know roughly the impacts are on your infrastructure and that is why we need that measurement in the General Plan. It is a maximum or an absolute and should be high enough to allow flexibility. Then you use zoning to get what you want in your particular community or neighborhood. H. Blackson added that it is similar to dwelling units per acre, without the parcelization, setbacks, and design standards. It is the basis for measuring intensity of where people do not live.

D. Van Dierendonck asked if the street level was part of the building and was underneath the structure (not underground parking), does it count in the FAR. I. Holler responded that generally in this County, it does not work that way. He added that FAR is the commercial/industrial equivalent of density, a measurement of the intensity so that we can use that to calculate impact.

G. Shackelford stated that the only real problem in this area is that there is no way to keep big box stores out of this area. B. Woods replied that that was one of the directions that some of the communities wanted to go, to limit big box stores so that it does not overpower communities. N. LaMontagne added that big box stores use low FARs, so by raising your FARs, you are allowing other types of buildings. If you want to exclude big box stores, you may want to establish minimums.

H. Blackson added that the floor area ratio is a relationship between the area and the floor coverage of the site and it will come to design guidelines and design standards to figure out setbacks, like in a single family home, of where that building is to be located.



Here is an area placed at .25 so the lot is only allowed to have one-quarter of the coverage. But if you bump this up to .50, you can add another floor on this quarter lot because it would still be the same, it would still be half of the floor area ratio but you can manipulate the building on this site as need be with your design standards.

In your zoning, you can set a limit of 35' and 2 floors. You can put setbacks of 25' from the street, side setbacks, and parking might be a factor in terms of how much space you can actually use. So you might have a maximum set, but may not be able to reach it through your parking standards and landscaping.

J. Phillips stated that FARs are a good idea but it needs to be judiciously applied so FARs truly represent what can be built there given the zoning constraints. I. Holler agreed with J. Phillips regarding considerations for parking, setback requirements and height restrictions in terms of their relationship with FARs.

Second Agenda Item: Regional Land Use Framework: Commercial Designations –

I. Holler wanted to remind everyone that we are not talking about zoning but rather the land use designations.

Existing Commercial Designations:

- Office Professional: provides primarily for administrative and professional services. It is the type of use that you may associate with a business partner. When staff looked at this, we found that office and professional services could easily be accommodated in other commercial areas that you may want to have that type of use integrated, as opposed to creating a separate business park.
- Neighborhood Commercial: allows for limited, small scale commercial uses that serve the daily needs to local residence. This is the type of commercial you might see in downtown areas, such as some parts of Ramona, Fallbrook, and Julian. These are areas that may have neighborhood commercial designations, allowing for commercial uses that are smaller in scale and do not provide for regional needs, but rather the residences there.
- General Commercial: provides for a wider range of commercial and retail services and activities. This designation would also include regional shopping centers. This is the type of land use designation that would be applied to areas such as North County Fair (along I-15, south part of Escondido). Commercial strip centers would end up in this type of designation.
- Service Commercial: allows even for heavier commercial or light industrial uses. The Land Use element describes this as differing from General Commercial, in its emphasis to provide services to commercial zones that would include wholesaling and warehousing activities. Upon reviewing this, Service Commercial seemed that it would be more appropriate as a Light Industrial designation.
- Visitor-Serving Commercial: used primarily for uses that cater to visitors or tourists. It is kind of an interesting designation in that the functions described here are in many cases, more appropriate as a zoning function. It is not applied throughout the County and the areas where it is most applied would be in the Borrego area and the way the description reads, it would be more appropriately resolved through application of the zoning ordinance, in which particular zones are to provide for these type of uses.

As we looked at this, we looked for opportunities where we might be able to simplify designations and do away with such like Visitor-Serving Commercial, where it is provided for through zoning. Office Professional can be accommodated in other commercial designations and Visitor-Serving Commercial can be accommodated via changes through the zoning ordinance or correct applications of zones.

G. Shackelford asked if staff was working on developing some separation through this process. I. Holler stated that staff recognized that most of that commercial on Hwy 54 would be more appropriate for

industrial types of uses. Some separation may be needed to reflect conditions that G. Shackelford described as having in his community.

J. Phillips stated we should not eliminate any General Plan designations because there are existing plans that are built-out to those designations. Every one of the existing designations are necessary in developing a general plan for a community because there is a big difference between the designations: cannot have a used car lot unless you are in Service Commercial, etc. Feels that there is no way that staff can do the three categories that has been presented today and not screw up the General Plan in Valle de Oro. I. Holler stated that much of what J. Phillips described is regulated via zoning, not the land use designations. The enclosure regulations are a function of zoning and not the General Plan. B. Woods stated that there may be a need for an understanding of zoning versus land use designations because they become intertwined in our minds as not being separated.

J. Ferguson stated that we need to be careful with getting rid of existing things because we may not remember why someone had fought for it and what you may be losing.

G. Shackelford stated that it is extremely important in this process to find out what it is that you want to solve because you may be threatening the livelihood of existing business owners. D. Van Dierendonck stated that what is being proposed is a plan for the future and should not be a concern about the effects it may have on what we conceive as grandfathered businesses.

J. Elliott mentioned that on his own commercial property, when FCI came in, he could sell a whole apple pie but could not sell a slice. B. Woods responded that this is one of the examples of what you can and cannot do because of the existing restrictions and a more general approach may solve some of those issues. I. Holler stated that there are a number of similar concerns and that is part of the reason staff is reviewing these designations.

Staff's Alternatives – Potential Changes to the Land Use Designations:

- General Commercial: provides for retail operations and services that may meet both regional and community needs. It is very similar to what is in the existing Land Use element today. Examples of this would probably take the form of strip commercial centers, regional or anchor-tenant shopping centers. This would be the only designation where big box developers can locate.
- Village Commercial: this would be most closely associated with the current land use designation of Neighborhood Commercial. The idea behind this was to provide for smaller scale retail, commercial, and professional services that meet the needs of the community and local residents. Looking for a mix of goods and services, allowing office professional uses, retail, and service, to the scale that would fit in with the community character. Big box retail is excluded. Examples of where this might exist today would be Main Street in Fallbrook, parts of Main Street in Ramona, and Julian.
- Rural Commercial: intended for areas that may be more remote, like Descanso or Jacumba, where you end up with much smaller areas of commercial.

What staff wanted to do was to create a hierarchy, allow for a mix of uses, even in General Commercial, allow for an infill development type of experience via Village Commercial, allow for more a “quirky mix” in the backcountry areas via the Rural Commercial designations, and recognize that some of the heavier intensity uses that now occur under Service Commercial may be more appropriate under industrial. These changes would allow for more of a mix of activities - especially in Village Commercial, where staff introduced an idea in which compatible residential uses are allowed, for example retail on the ground floor and residential on the second.

B. Woods asked if staff was prepared to discuss the issues of existing commercial designations and what are the advantages of simplifying the designations in the 2020 plan. I. Holler responded that many of the concerns today are related more to zoning issues rather than land use designations and the key is the compatibilities that we establish between the commercial designations and the individual zones so as to not come up with a plethora of nonconforming uses.

J. Phillips stated that he did not care if staff added designations but did not want to delete any of them. Feels that there is a need to protect office uses so that it does not become retail. Feels that we should not combine all of the concepts.

L. Jones stated that these three categories are too general and encompassing. Feels they may need to be broken down. Feels that what may help is to give a general idea of where the industrial and commercial designations are now and where they are proposed.

J. Ferguson stated that staff is not telling the committee what is broken that needs to be fixed. I. Holler replied that staff recognizes that incompatibility and process streamlining is a problem. Working with the Regional Land Use Element, it is more complicated than it needs to be and that is the problem. We have an opportunity to make it simpler and to improve it. T. Popejoy added that the approach is to look at it and ask if it makes sense. One of staff's conclusions was that Office Professional and Visitor-Serving Commercial can easily be accommodated under a designation like General Commercial. You want to allow businesses to have flexibility, for example, if a business wanted to have food located nearby, they can put in a restaurant. Staff has no intention of creating legal, nonconforming uses. N. LaMontagne added that staff's data shows that we do not have office professional uses in the Office Professional category but rather residential, so what role is it serving now.

J. Phillips stated that the combination of General and Service Commercial would not give them the protection they have now with commercial within their community in that one would need to do a GPA. If we make these proposed changes, the community will not be able to fight rezones because they would comply with the General Plan. Does not want to give people the opportunity to apply for a rezone because they now comply with the new general plan designations. I. Holler replied that Service Commercial is not intended to be rolled into General Commercial and is rather more closely aligned with Light Industrial. J. Phillips responded that he did not want Service Commercial to be changed to industrial in his community. I. Holler stated that by reading the existing Regional Land Use Element, he would find that Service Commercial provides for heavier or light industrial uses. J. Phillips stated that changing the name to industrial would create blight in his area.

G. Jemmott stated that there may be a need for an industrial agriculture category because if Deer Springs Road were to increase lanes, the Golden Door health spa would move and could turn into a strip mall or something of the like that can withstand the road impacts. Suggested adding the industrial ag category to put those things in that do not fit. M. Morgan included wineries in that suggestion.

J. Chisolm stated that ag needs flexibility the most and advises caution in how you control industrial uses.

D. Neirenckx stated that additional designations are good and the existing ones need to be retained.

D. Van Dierendonck stated that we are losing our agricultural lands which is important in this county and asked why it is not being addressed in the General Plan.

Break

T. Popejoy addressed C. Ayers's written question of would you describe the Zoning Ordinance that you envision as compatible with the new categories. T. Popejoy stated that it will be something that we will have to do and that what is being proposed covers the range of uses that we currently have: 12 residential, five commercial, and two industrial.

Third Agenda Item: Regional Land Use Framework: Industrial Designations –

Existing Industrial Designations:

- Limited Impact Industrial: those industrial and manufacturing uses that have low nuisance characteristics and also requires that those enterprises be conducted inside a building.

- General Impact Industrial: for uses that exhibit moderate to severe nuisance characteristics. These are described as typically large sites who have major access to major roadways.

Staff's Alternatives – Potential Changes to the Land Use Designations:

What is being presented in the staff alternatives is not that different from the current General Plan.

- Light Industrial: very similar to Limited Impact Industrial.
- Heavy Industrial: more descriptive than the current General Impact Industrial.

Staff saw that the Light Industrial designation could include some of the heavy commercial uses that has been described here. The idea is that this Light Industrial category would allow the flexibility of manufacturing and sales, for example, an artist who sells pottery but needs a kiln to make it. This would also include wholesale and warehouse services, contract construction, transportation, agricultural support, and incidental (ideally selling what you make on site). Staff kept it very broad in a sense in order to provide Light Industrial uses in rural areas that are physically suited for industrial.

Heavy Industrial would have moderate to severe negative impacts or nuisance characteristics. What is important about describing this alternative is that it would be in areas where total urban services are available, including water and sewer, the kinds of things that mitigate the severe impacts that would be generated by those type of uses. Also included are areas of existing industrial use so that these industrial areas would be in or adjacent to existing industrial areas, we are not looking to expand. Another location criteria associated with heavy industrial is that they locate in close proximity to each other in order to share transportation, energy, water, and sewer.

J. Ferguson stated that the single most important concern on Limited Impact is indoor versus outdoor. T. Popejoy stated that staff would not be opposed to including it and did not necessarily take it out. B. Woods stated that the bigger issue is like what we saw in Lakeside with USDRIP and what we were going to do with M52 and how much outside storage was allowed. We had a modified solution for them when we adopted it and there are a lot of issues we get to examine here to the benefit of our community if we have new light industrial zoning versus new heavy industrial zoning. G. Shackelford stated that we really have to look at the zones first or you truly cannot map out on your map where you want the light and the heavy. B. Woods thinks that this is an opportunity, if we look at it that way, to define industrial zoning, new industrial zoning, or existing with this General Plan, and thinks that it will give us the safeguards against some of the issues brought up and those found with the deliberations with USDRIP. Obviously we need some more industrial zoning in the County for our growth and this is a great opportunity to deal with protecting the integrity of the County and the communities.

J. Phillips finds the new designations unacceptable because this new land use designation for light industrial completely changes the color of light industrial. To make this change in the General Plan would open the door for rezones from M52 to M54 because you are allowing in this new designation of Light Industrial, contract construction services, manufacturing and sales, and agricultural support services, which can produce a real problem and by adding onsite manufacturing and sales turns it into commercial.

Motion: *In both the commercial and industrial land use areas, the Steering Committee gives a clear indication that existing designations shall remain and will consider new designations, that may be used in communities that want to have a little different structure than what we have ended up with in a lot of our communities (J. Phillips).*

Discussion:

B. Woods responded to the motion stating that the group is not going to come to any formal conclusions today. J. Phillips stated that any rezone is easy if it conforms to the General Plan and wants to keep his General Plan designations in industrial, their definitions, and wants to keep them in commercial. He loves the idea of adding new thought for those who want to do something different but he does not want to do this in his community. B. Woods stated that he would like the group to evolve, considering the issues that were brought forth today. I. Holler added that staff would like to take the comments from today and have it brought back.

J. Ferguson asked for a response to what is wrong with just adding designations and why there is a need to change the existing designations. I. Holler responded that staff would like to make sure that there is an opportunity to allow for mixed use that does not allow segregated uses that do not need to be segregated. He added that staff would like to be able to look at the current designations and make the changes to those without throwing the framework out.

L. Jones stated that J. Phillip's motion did not change anything at this point. She has listed four items for review: 1) ag industrial and commercial, 2) indoor versus outdoor – allowances in industrial zoning, 3) listing of Zoning Ordinance to each designation, and 4) justification to changes. M. Morgan stated that it is important to address these before voting on a motion.

J. Phillips withdrew his motion.

J. Chisolm cautioned the group on ag stating that he could not imagine designating ag when you do not know what is out there. B. Woods stated that I. Holler wanted ag on the next agenda.

R. Smith heard comments that zoning issues were not going to be dealt with until after this is done and asked if you do not know what the zoning is, how do you deal with it. T. Popejoy stated that staff will be looking at zoning as part of the *General Plan 2020* process as it needs to be consistent.

J. van Dierendonck stated that ag industrial is two different designations as one is commercial and the other is industrial, which need to be addressed. Stated that we have no role models or good planning in the County and would like ideas or pictures from other places brought back to look at and say where to start. J. Phillips stated that we do not need to spend time on that when we are designing the tools. G. Shackelford stated that he did not think it was so bad that we do not have any good examples of planning and if you wanted to find it, he thinks you can find it.

G. Jemmott stated that industrial ag goes into heavy industrial areas because of the noise and smell pollution. Added that this sounds like General Impact Industrial so it should be more of a specific use than a category.

L. Jones asked if there were other issues that were not placed on the list mentioned. Final list included: 5) need better/more creative tools to allow incentive for better development, and 6) modify Zoning Ordinance, M52 and M54 zoning ordinances (refer to Lakeside case on contamination of soil and processing from the ballpark).

Next Meeting –

Next meeting is scheduled for Saturday, November 17th.

Meeting adjourned at 12:00 pm.